

## Satire

media that points out weaknesses, errors, incongruities and/ or wrong-doings of individuals, groups, or humanity. Although satire often points out these weaknesses, etc. in a playful, humorous, manner, it is meant to reform.

## Satirical Devices

### How is Satire created?

- **Absurdity**: something that seems like it would never happen, but could. For example, in *Brave New World*, the society has become so stratified that each class wears a specific color.
- **Exaggeration or overstatement**: something that does happen, but is exaggerated to absurd lengths. This is the most common type of satire. For example, a caricature.
- **Understatement**: a statement that seems incomplete or less than truthful given the facts. Think sarcasm with the intentions of evoking change. For example, if a student frequently forgot his homework and I replied, "It's okay, you *never* forget."
- **Parody**: a mocking imitation, often of a literary work. "Shrek" is a parody of a fairy tale.
- **Wit or word play**: the title *The Importance of Being Earnest*. It is a play on the word "earnest", meaning honest, and the name "Earnest".
- **Euphemism**: the substitution of an inoffensive term for one that is offensive. For example, replacing "die" with "pass away".
- **Irony**: conveying the opposite of what is expected. For example, Marge reading "Fretful Mother" as she ignores her child.

**\*\*Note:** Sarcasm is not a manner in which satire is presented as it is usually spiteful rather than being something that attempts to evoke change.

## Two types of satire...

- **Horatian**: aims to correct through humor. For example, *Importance of Being Earnest*.
- **Juvenalian**: points with contempt to the corruption of men and institutions. For example, *Brave New World* or *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

As we watch the preview for "Zoolander", consider the point of satire.

What does this movie mock? The model industry, but what else? Think about our guiding question...

Although "Zoolander" mocks with Horatian satire and *Dorian* with Juvenalian, what do these satires share in common?

Particularly consider Dorian's reaction to Sybil's death on pages 86-94, keeping in mind the history of their relationship and how each character defines love. What is it Wilde is making fun of in his society? What change does he intend to produce? How do we know?

Be prepared to share your group's reactions and to provide at least one piece of textual evidence to support your response.